Enfield Clean Energy Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 5 May 2013

The Committee

The Enfield Clean Energy Committee is a Town Committee made up of Enfield Residents interested in promoting Clean Renewable Energy.

The team members:
Jeff Myjak—Chair
Ray Gwozdz - V. Chair
Virginia Higley
Steve Moriarty
Greg Mark
Doug Lombardi
Melissa Everett

LIAISONS :

Town Council:
Tom Kienzler
William Edgar
Staff:
Joel Cox

Interested in joining our team? Send a note to CleanEnergy@Enfield.org and we will send you an application.

Points:

We have reached 200 points and are now eligible for a 2kw solar system. We are working on our next KW.

Each Clean Option purchase is worth 1 point. Each Solar or Geothermal system is worth 3points.

Clean Option Points	170
System Points	87
Total Points	**257**

What we pay for, when we pay for electricity

When the electric bill comes, we pay it. Faithfully. We like the amenities it provides -- refrigerators, computers, televisions, a lamp shining in the window when we get home at night. But have you ever wondered why people in Connecticut pay some of the highest electric bills in the country? Do you understand where your power comes from? What about all the different charges and fees on your bill? Is there anything you can do to reduce the tab?

Here's a primer of sorts on what we pay for when we pay for electricity. We pay for our location, first of all. Jessie Stratton, director of policy for the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, said that, in general, electricity in New England is more expensive than in other parts of the country.

A December 2012 accounting from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows New England as a whole has the highest retail electricity costs of any region in the continental United States. The reason, she said, is simple: New England doesn't have energy-producing natural resources. "We don't have natural gas or oil or coal," she said, "We have a little solar, a little wind, a little hydropower."

However, Connecticut Light & Power, the electric utility most of us use, plays no part in making that energy.

That's because after utility deregulation, which occurred in 2000, the utilities stopped producing electricity altogether. "We're a delivery system," said Mitch Gross, spokesman for CL&P. "We're like Federal Express or UPS."

"It's been that way since 2000," said Michael West, spokesman for United Illuminating. "We've been trying to get people accustomed to that."

Mark Lebel, energy fellow for the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, said, all in all, deregulation has been a good thing with more competition in the energy market. "The wholesale market for energy has changed."

Cont pg 2—See “What we Pay”

Spring is Here - What to Do to Prepare for the Hot Summer

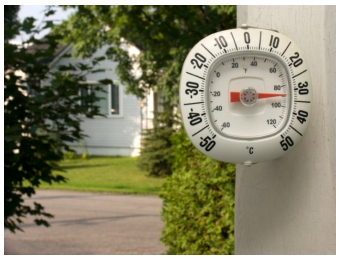
With Spring finally here, it won’t be long before summer arrives. And if these past winters are any indication of what we can expect, we could be in for a wild summer. So how can you prepare?

First, have your air conditioner tuned up and ready to go. An well tuned AC will cost you less to run. Next, put it on a “Set Back” Thermostat. That is one of those thermostats that you can program so that it won’t be as cool in the house when you are not home. But only raise the temp by 2 to 4 degrees when you are not home. Any more than that will require the unit to work much harder to cool the house down when you get home - hence wasting any savings you had during the day.

Consider setting your thermostat at 72, 73 or 74 degrees when you are home. Most people don’t need to be at 68 degrees.

Next, fix those leaky facets and hoses. Those drips are costing you money, not only is it adding to your water bill, but soon it will add to your sewer bill.

Seal your air leaks. Cooling the inside of your home, only to have it go outside through leaks around your doors and windows is wasting your money. Start by having a Home Energy Audit—



http://www.cl-p.com/home/saveenergy/rebates/homeenergysolutions.aspx

CLEAN ENERGY FAQ'S

Q: Now that "The Energy Expo is over, what are the next projects The Enfield Clean Energy Committee plan to work on?

A. We have a few things in the works. One is a booth at The July 4th Celebration on The Green. Next, we are working on a Speaker Series leading up to October which is "Energy Awareness Month" and we will be a gain putting on a display at The Library. And we are working on a "Cover Our Roof" campaign for JFK. The town will soon be receiving a solar array from The Clean Energy Fund for the efforts of The Enfield Clean Energy Committee. We want to use that array as a start to cover the roof of the Main Office and Library on The JFK Middle School Roof.

Working with the Students of TAG Students at JFK, we will work to raise the funds needed for the 30hwh to 35kwh system.

Q: I have a question that may be of interest to your readers. Is there a place where I can send it?

A. Yes. Send it to cleanenergy@enfield.org. We will be happy to answer it in an upcoming newsletter.

Enfield Clean Energy

www.enfieldcleanenergy.net

Xtreme Battery unveiling giant renewable battery system

It's not your typical AA battery. On Thursday (March 28) Duke Energy Renewables—a Duke Energy subsidiary, the Department of Energy and Xtreme Power unveiled a 153 megawatt Notrees Windpower Project, in Ector and Winkler counties, Texas to witness the unveiling of what might be the world's largest battery system, a system that's capable of storing 36 megawatts of energy

The battery was deployed at the site to provide energy storage for the wind farm, helping to stabilize its output to the grid. Such battery systems are being considered for solar installations as well. "Battery storage is an important innovation to address the variability of wind and solar energy generation," said Duke Energy Renewables President Greg Wolf. "Developing an expertise in this advanced technology will enable us to expand the use of renewable energy, better integrate it into the power grid and become even more efficient at serving our customers."

The project has been in the works a while, at least since 2009 when Duke Energy matched a $22 million grant from the DOE to install large-scale batteries. The grant came

from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

For more information, go to http://www.cleanenergyauthority.com/solar-energy-news/doe-duke-renewables-xtreme-battery-unveiling-032213

What we pay (continued from Pg 1)

Today, people can buy electricity from the utilities, which purchase it at what's called the standard rate -- now .076150 cents per kilowatt hour. About half the people in the state still do that.

The state has a website -- Ctenergyinfo.com -- that consumers can go to look at the different companies and what they offer. Stratton said, however, that people should study the offers carefully. Some offer lower rates when you sign up, then increase them a few months later. "Do your homework," she said. Stratton also said the state is considering holding an auction of sorts for the half of the people who still buy electricity at the standard rate via the utility.

Statton's CL&P bill for January and February says she used 468 kilowatts of electricity. She have a small house. The state average is about 700 kilowatts, Stratton said. That means what she pay for the actual electricity she uses, including the extra charge for Community Energy, was $40.27 on her last bill. That's about $5 less than what she paid CL&P for bringing it to her. That simple breakdown is on the front of CL&P bills. The utility's delivery charges are on the back.

In January and February, CL&P charged me $9.22 for bringing electricity over large transmission lines, based on the kilowatt hours she used. It charged me another $16 a month just because she is hooked up to its service. Everyone pays that $16, every month, regardless of how much power they use. Again, based on the kilowatt hours she used, CL&P charged her $12.90 to bring electricity to her house in January and February.

There are three smaller delivery costs. One, 89 cents, is for recovered costs -- what CL&P gets to charge its customers for selling the Millstone power plants after deregulation. One is a $4.44 penalty the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the state Public Utility Regulatory Commission levy because of power congestion in the state -- there is not the infrastructure needed to supply the state with power at peak demand without buying higher-priced electricity.

FEMA and PURA let the utility pass that penalty on to us. The final fee of $2.04 is the combined public benefit charge. That covers several things. It pays for programs that promote energy efficiency in Connecticut. It helps people in tough financial straits pay their electric bills and helps cover unpaid bills.

How to cut your bill—
The great frontier for reducing energy bills in the future is the simplest -- use less electricity. Stratton said Connecticut used to lead the country in the amount of money it allocated for energy efficiency programs. It's now sixth.

Some great resources are www.Energizect.com or your local Clean Energy Committee Task Force.

To read the full article, go to: http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/What-we-pay-for-when-we-pay-for-electricity-4342419.php#ixzz2QLZvK3Wq